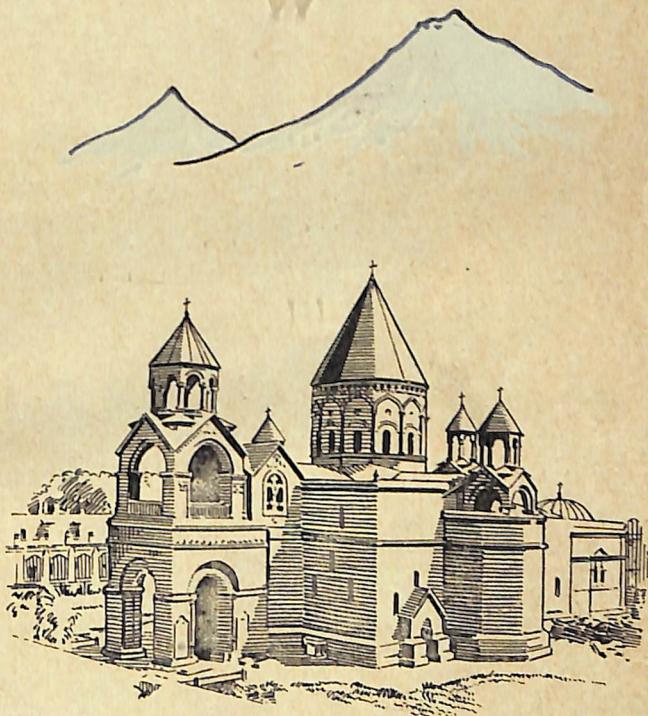


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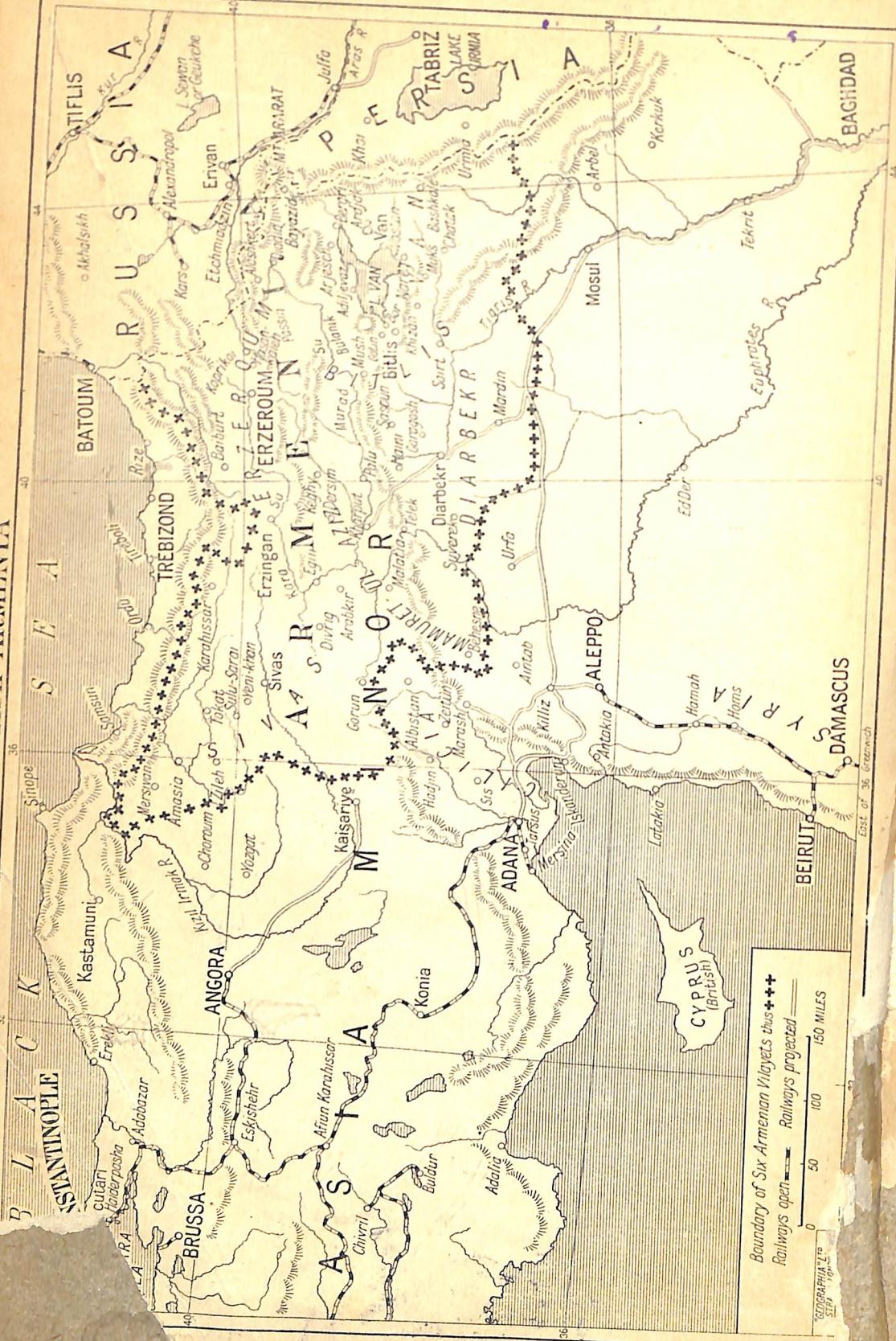
A SEARCHLIGHT ON ARMENIA.

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Annual Subscription 6 Shillings.



All communications affecting this periodical should be addressed to the Editor, "Ararat," The Armenian United Association of London, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.



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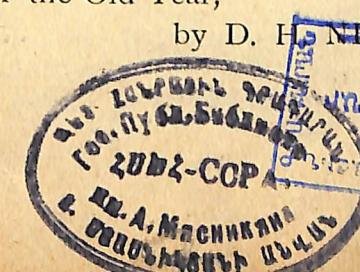
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Current Notes.

We begin as usual by chronicling first of all the most salient features of the great war. So far as the conflict between the Triple Entente Powers and the Austro-German combination is concerned, matters have not made any great progress. The German armies are held firmly, and the net result of the plus and minus account, however trifling, may be set down to the credit of the Triple Entente. In naval affairs, Great Britain has scored heavily in the total defeat of the German commerce-raiding cruisers off the Falkland Islands, and in the mauling of the great German battle cruisers while on their attempted raid on the English coast.

We are concerned here more particularly with the progress of the war on the frontier between Russia and the Turkish provinces. Here the Turks have received their first lesson, which, we are convinced, is not their last. They had entered Russian territory between Kars and Batoum, in the hope of crushing Russian opposition and ultimately penetrating into Tiflis. The Russians, however, played a waiting game, as they have more than once done against the Germans. On January 4th, what was intended to be the Turkish enveloping column, was totally defeated at Sarykamisch, where the 9th Corps were surrounded and surrendered. The retreat of the 10th Corps towards the Turkish frontier became a rout under bitterly severe winter conditions. It was now the turn of the 11th Corps to try and break through and to cover the retreat of the 10th Corps. It had received strong reinforcements and supplies from Erzeroum, and the command was taken over by Enver Pasha himself, the operations being conducted through the Kara Urgan and Khorum Dag districts. With the usual judicious retirements in face of the enemy, and the necessary regrouping of their forces, the Russians took the offensive and, despite violent snowstorms, set to work with the greatest heroism to carry all before them. An entire Turkish regiment was practically annihilated near Altoun Boulag, Zivine was carried by assault and its impregnable Castle captured. Thus attacked in the centre and flanks, the Turks broke into precipitate flight, abandoning stores, ammunition and wounded. The pursuit lasted for five days, during which whole regiments, with their commanders, were taken prisoners, together with three camps. Thus the rout of Kara Urgan completed the first act of the campaign, which the Turks have been rash enough to initiate.

When the news of the Sarykamisch victory was received, a congratulatory telegram was sent by us to the Russian Ambassador in London :—"Pray accept from Armenian Association of London

respectful greetings on glorious victory of Russia in Caucasus as first important step towards liberation of Armenia." To this came the reply :—" Pray convey to Armenian Association in London my warm thanks for their congratulations and my best wishes for Armenians' happy future and liberation.—Benckendorff."

Operations in the region of the Persian Gulf are proceeding satisfactorily by British forces from India with the assistance of gunboats. During a reconnaissance to the north of Mezera, severe loss was inflicted on the enemy, about 5,000 strong, who were driven back in disorder. We shall not be surprised to hear before long that the British forces are in the vicinity of Baghdad, a name with all the glamour of Eastern fable, whence German domination was to spread the fruits of Kultur throughout the Farther East. And then again the Turks, in company with predatory Kurds, have made a diversion towards Azerbeijan, or Persian Armenia, and have occupied Tabriz. Their stay here will be short, we are certain, but the consequences of a Turkish invasion to non-combatants are appalling, and has resulted in a very large exodus of Armenians from Persian territory over the Russian frontier. The distress of these fugitives has been heart-rending, being aggravated by the severity of the winter, and all the relief that is possible is being given.

The name of Tabriz brings up reminiscences of previous fights in these regions, and the *Daily Chronicle* puts forth a derivation of the name which we give as we find it in that paper :—

In taking Tabriz the Turks have added some significance to the traditional derivation of its name. Its original name was Shahistan, the King's Town, but an Armenian monarch, invading Persia, sacked the city in revenge for a brother's death and gave it the new name of *Ta-vrežh*, which is the Persian for " this revenge." Like most frontier towns Tabriz has suffered much from the invader, but probably more from earthquakes. The city was never intended by nature as the headquarters of an army, for the water supply is precarious, and as the Persian burgomaster is not a hygienist, cholera is always knocking at the city gates.

The Armenian Volunteer contingents are doing their share of good work with the Russian forces. During the advance of the Turks towards Ardahan, the fourth Volunteer contingent under Keri was engaged with some regiments of Turkish regulars at Alaghaz. While

resting at a village after 48 hours' incessant fighting in deep snow, the Turks rushed the village and tried to pour a hot fire into the Armenians from the roofs and windows of the houses. The latter succeeded in retreating and holding a hill overlooking the village. A desperate battle ensued and lasted into the next day, when the Armenians finally succeeded in routing the Turks, about 4,000 in number, who left about 400 in killed and wounded. The loss of the Armenians was 120 killed and wounded. This was one of the incidents in the attempt of the 11th Corps to join hands with the Turks who were routed at Sary-kamisch. Keri and his staff were warmly congratulated for their fine work, and Keri received the St. George's Cross of the 2nd Class.

The above decoration conferred on Keri is not the only one received by Armenians. There have been others gained in the fighting on the German and Polish battlefields. A telegram from Tiflis states that Antranig, the famous and best known guerilla leader, who commands the first Armenian Volunteer contingent, has been publicly decorated with the Order of St. George. The occasion was made the scene of great enthusiasm.

With regard to Egypt, as we go to press the great and threatened Turkish invasion has not taken place, but the garrison is prepared for all contingencies, and there is ample room for housing all prisoners of war. The new Sultan, however, is winning golden opinions from all who value peace and prosperity. It was a graceful act of his to appoint Arakel Bey, an Armenian, and the grandson of the late renowned Nubar Pasha, to be his private secretary. Arakel Bey is an accomplished scholar and linguist, who has taken much interest in favour of his countrymen against Turkish persecution. The appointment is well-merited and has been well received. It is also understood that Mme. de Martino and Mme. Arakel Bey Nubar will be Ladies-in-Waiting to H.H. the Sultana, who will also have at least one English lady and two native ladies in her suite.

On the occasion of the Russian New Year, the Armenian Archbishop at Manchester sent the following telegram to the Russian Ambassador :—

" On the occasion of the New Year, I beg to convey to your Excellency the best wishes of myself and my flock, and to offer up most fervent prayers for the happiness and welfare of His Majesty the Czar and the Royal Family, as well as for the increased glory and prosperity of his Empire."

A prompt reply came in the following terms :—

“ Have received your Lordship’s telegram. I will make it my duty to forward it to Petrograd to be submitted to highest quarter, with warm thanks.—Benckendorff.”

On 22nd of January a further wire was received from the same source :—

“ By command of the Emperor, I have been instructed to express to Your Grace and all Armenians in Manchester His Majesty’s high appreciation and best thanks for greetings and feelings expressed in your New Year telegram to me.—Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador.”

We would draw the special attention of our readers to the two appeals which appear in this issue—one from the Armenian Refugees’ Relief Fund, and the other from The Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund. The first of these is under the control of the Armenian United Association of London, whose Hon. Treasurer, Mr. A. P. Hacobian, 21, Addison Road, Kensington, W., is receiving subscriptions ; the second is entirely under British control, and has been started through the energetic efforts of Miss E. J. Robinson, whose sympathies with the cause of Armenia are well known. Subscriptions to the latter may be sent either to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. H. A. Godson Bohn, 17, Holland Villas Road, Kensington, W., or to the Hon. Secretary of the Fund, Miss E. J. Robinson, 35a, Elsham Road, Kensington, W.

Both Funds have been launched to meet a most urgent need, and subscribers may rely on their contributions being utilised for the succour of distressed humanity in the direst of extremities. The Armenian Refugees’ Relief Fund has already remitted the sum of £4,200 to His Holiness the Catholicos at Etchmiadzin in Russian Armenia ; and the Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund has also made a remittance of £200 through Moscow and Tiflis. We publish a list of subscriptions to the Armenian Refugees’ Relief Fund at the close of the article on the subject, and further lists will be published in our future issues.

The following translation of a telegram, received by the Armenian Archbishop at Manchester on January 20th, will put in a clear light to what extent misery prevails and help is needed :—

“ Tiflis, January 18th.—In consequence of the war with Turkey, about 100,000 Armenians have saved their lives by emigrating to the Caucasus. Situation extremely deplorable. Numbers dying of cold and hunger. To save our ruined people, we need great help on behalf of these martyrs. We beg of you to organise funds—Address, Central Relief Society for Armenians, under the protection of the Catholicos, Hon. President ; Bishop Mesrop, President.—Samson Eroutimian.”

We have been asked to state that the Rt. Hon. G. W. E. Russell has done the Armenian Society the honour of becoming its President. We wish this Society all the success it deserves, for with such a distinguished President, and with the indefatigable efforts of so zealous an Hon. Secretary as Miss Robinson, the future championship of the Armenian cause among the British public is in the best of hands. The fruits of the labours of this Society are already evident in the successful raising of the Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund, through whom funds have even now reached the destitute in the Caucasus, and clothing for them is on the way.

A correspondent asks us how it is that we have omitted to tender our gratitude to those Frenchmen who have been precious friends to us in bringing our cause prominently before the public. He mentions M. J. Coudunier de Chassaigne and M. Maurice Froyez. The former, the London representative of the Paris *Figaro*, had a most sympathetic article in *Le Cri de Londres* of November 6th, entitled *Un Peuple Martyr* ; the latter, in *La Chronique Londres* of December 5th, does full justice to us in his article *L’Armenie*. We look upon the French nation as among the best of our friends, and our failure in noticing these articles was not due to want of appreciation of their efforts on our behalf. We take this opportunity, however, to offer them our warmest thanks, and feel sure that the French Government, of which such names as we have mentioned act as the mouthpiece, will ever be staunch supporters of Armenians in enabling them to obtain freedom and justice. Then again, while dealing with Frenchmen, we must not forget M. S. Pichon, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, who has been writing strongly about us in the *Petit Journal*. We have no doubt that our Armenian friends in France have noted all such powerful advocacy, and we shall always be pleased if correspondents will bring to our notice whatever appears to uphold the cause of Armenia in the foreign press.

Russian Armenians and the War.

While in agonising suspense as to the safety of practically one half of our nation within the Turkish Empire, we will here give an idea of the great enthusiasm prevailing among the Armenians in Russia at what is looked upon as the early liberation of their brethren from the dire consequences of the Turkish yoke. Our compatriots of the Caucasus are, moreover, making superhuman efforts towards the realisation of a free and prosperous country under new conditions, which it is hoped will result from the present war.

The Russian press of Petrograd, Moscow and elsewhere, representing all shades of opinion and of classes of the Russian people, are themselves taking the lead in starting discussions with regard to the political status of Turkish Armenia, once the Turks have been cleared, bag and baggage, out of the fair expanse of our beauteous hills and plains, which have for centuries been converted by them into a vast cemetery for our millions, martyred both in body and soul. These expressions of opinion we have collected and will reproduce at the end of this article; and it will be seen from the quotations coming from the liberal section of the press, that the views expressed by such Russians themselves are clear and definite as to the grant of complete autonomy to Turkish Armenia under the suzerainty of Russia. The remaining sections of the press greet the coming liberation of Armenia in general terms and without any specific proposals for the final settlement.

The Armenians in Russia have, however, set to work in the first place to mobilise all their strength and their efforts towards securing the safety and the liberation of their Turkish brethren. In this course they have followed an unswerving line, by not only giving the best of their manhood to the regular Russian forces, but also by forming Armenian Volunteer contingents from both Turkish Armenians and others, equipping them and putting them into the field at their own expense and under the direct control of the regular Russian armies. Their forethought and patriotism have urged them also to provide hospitals and necessary equipment for the needs of the wounded and sick. Every important centre has its Relief Committee, and everything is being done that money and willing hearts can accomplish.

To these efforts has come the encouraging voice of the Russian press, and it is no wonder that the Armenian press of Tiflis and other Russian centres have taken up the lead given by the Russian papers, and are commenting on and developing the welcome and generous expressions of Russian political thought, and attempting, if it is possible at this stage of the problem to do so, to voice the opinion and the wishes of the Armenian nation with regard to the status of Turkish Armenia in the near future.

Statistical figures are produced, comparing the races living in the six Armenian vilayets, and from these the conclusion is drawn that 38½ per cent. of the entire population is Armenian, whereas Turks and Kurds, taken separately on a racial basis, form a smaller percentage of the total population. It should not be forgotten that a legitimate readjustment of the mischievous gerrymandering carried out by Abdul Hamid in the early eighties would restore quite a 50 per cent. proportion of the pure Armenian element, each of the other races remaining in a distinct minority. Basing their views on these figures, our kinsmen in the Caucasus have come to the conclusion that backed by Russia, and consequently by her Western Allies, Turkish Armenia is entitled

to put forward a claim to complete political self-government under the protectorate of Russia as the mandatory of the Triple Entente Powers. And with this firm hope in their hearts, our Russian brethren have put their shoulders to the wheel in the great task of co-operating in the liberation of their compatriots across the border.

The strain on the efforts of Russian Armenians has been considerably enhanced by the overwhelming number of refugees that are thronging into the Caucasus both from the Turkish and Persian sides, and their heroic efforts to stem the tide of distress in the bitter winter months would seem to be beyond human capacity. Armenian colonies throughout the world have risen to the occasion, and are supporting the efforts of Russian Armenians to the best of their power, but can all these efforts crush the fanaticism that is being let loose in the Turkish provinces before it is too late? The conditions of Belgium under German domination have struck the civilised nations of the world with horror owing to that country being better known and in close contiguity. The ravages that Armenia is going through is hidden from the sight of civilisation, and they are but a repetition, in an aggravated form, of what has happened time and again for decades, and therefore, so far as the civilised world is concerned, an old story. It is more than probable that the Turk, in his final fury at the coming disruption of his Empire, will attempt extermination, where possible in outlying areas, and that the agony of Armenia in this, as we hope her last, trial will even surpass all the horrors that are recorded in Armenian annals.

It is no doubt a hard fact that the liberty of nations is won by the sword, and it will be a glorious emergence of Armenian nationhood from the thralldom of centuries, for Armenia's sons to contemplate that their strong arm was uplifted to strike in the goodly company of their Russian protectors, to whom they owe so much. And for the whole-hearted help they are giving, and the blood they are themselves shedding freely, it is but natural that Russian Armenians should feel that there must be a just recognition of national rights when the day of reckoning comes.

We could give no better expression of their enthusiasm, their hopes and aspirations than by relating an incident which occurred at Nor-Nakhitchevan, in the Caucasus, where there is a large and prosperous Armenian colony. In November a large party of Armenian volunteers from Petrograd and Moscow, mostly composed of students from those universities, were on their way to Tiflis to join the forces. The railway station of Nakhitchevan was besieged in order to give a fitting send-off to these patriotic youths. Little girls and women flocked to bedeck them with flags and flowers, and as the train began to move away, there rang out from all voices one of the greatest of the national songs of Nalbandian, the great Armenian poet of the nineteenth century.

We are able to give a translation of some of the opening verses which, even when converted into a foreign tongue, retain much of the depth of their national spirit and their stirring call.

Our Fatherland, o'ertrampled by the foe,
Crush'd to the dust and prone in misery,
Now calls upon its sons to strike the blow
That shall avenge the past and set us free !

Our Fatherland for centuries hath lain
Enslaved in bondage. Only the heart's-blood
Of loyal sons its freedom can regain.
Then grudge not to thy land that hallowed flood.

Death can but once to any man befall,
And comes to each—whether in peace or strife—
But great and glorious acclaim we, all
Who for a nation's freedom give their life !

And this is the spirit which permeates the entire nation, and may it lead to the fruits which rightly belong to the vigour of an ancient race, now shaking itself free of the torpor in which it has slept for centuries, to resume its rôle of the great civilising agency of Western Asia.

Here we shall give some of the extracts from the Russian papers to which we have alluded above :—

The *Russkoe Slovo*, a liberal Russian organ, in one of its issues of November last, thus refers to the subject :

"By the grace of God, Russia will fulfil her ancient duty to the Armenian nation. We cannot allow the barbarous Kurdish hordes and Bashibazouks, disguised as Turkish soldiers, to outrage and revenge themselves on Armenians, when they have been defeated and in flight. Turkish Armenia will get complete autonomy, and will be saved for ever from the grip of Turkish *zaptiehs*, the condition prior to this being the disarming of the Kurdish brigand bands. We cannot refrain from carrying this obligation through ; our prestige and position in the Caucasus require it."

M. A. Djivelekoff, writing in the *Russki Viedemosti*, thus refers to the Armenians :—

"Armenians will play an important part in the war just begun against Turkey. This perhaps will be the heaviest ordeal which the fates have reserved for this little, long-suffering nation, which for about 2,000 years has kept the torch of civilisation alight throughout Western Asia. This ordeal will, however, be

the last. The war of Russia against Turkey means the dawn of freedom for the Armenians, that is, the prologue to a new and free life. . . . The war of Russia against Turkey is a sacred war for the Armenians. . . .

"In the course of the last forty years a great many things have changed. Armenians have had some bitter political experiences, and have accordingly trained themselves for mountain warfare being convinced that without force of arms they could never improve their prospects." The writer proceeds to describe the action of the powerful Dashnaksuthium party, thanks to whom "the Russian army will feel at home in the enemy's country, while the Turks, fighting in their own territory, will feel as if they were in an enemy's land.

"All this will mean enormous sacrifices for Armenia, an ordeal worse than anything she has yet gone through ; because the Turks, guided by Germans, will aim at ruthless extermination à la Abdul Hamid ; perhaps Armenia will endure greater sufferings than Poland or Belgium. Armenians must be prepared for all sacrifices. The prospect of a free political life under the protectorate of Russia deserves all sacrifices. . . . Armenian soil will once more be drenched with human blood. The Russian people must not forget that this little nation may perhaps bleed to death on its own native soil, because in this hour of trial it is still under the heel of its avowed enemy. One hope seems to gladden these gloomy days for the Armenians, the hope that this war will establish a brotherly feeling between Russia and Armenia."

The *Novoe Vremya* thus refers to the Armenians :—

"We are going again to hear of their exploits, as we heard of so many during the last Russo-Turkish war. The hero of the siege of Bayazid, Lieut.-Colonel Stockwitch, was saved with his brigade through the bravery of an Armenian, one Vartan, who was able to escape from the Turkish lines and to inform the Russian army of the state of Bayazid. Under the leadership of another Armenian, General Der-Ghukassoff, the Russian army rescued the garrison of Bayazid when the latter were reduced to feeding on mice. And that brave man has been immortalised in Armenian literature as a national hero."

Again, in another issue of the same paper, we find the well-known journalist, M. Menshikoff, thus writing :—

"The war against Turkey has produced an explosion of enthusiasm among the Armenian youth and has driven them into the ranks of the Russian soldiers. The motives of this action are quite obvious : The war promises to realise the sacred aspirations of the Armenian nation—their emancipation from the Moslem yoke. I think that Russia could take this as one of her obligations of the war, as well as the expulsion of the Turks from Europe."

Mr. Josephine Mayhew

The Armenian nation represents in its entirety a people martyred for Christendom . . . It appears to me," concludes M. Menshikoff, "that such enslavement of a whole nation ought to be considered intolerable from the point of view of Russian dignity. . . . Armenia will get her emancipation."

More recently the press of Petrograd reverts to the subject of Armenia, and the following powerful pronouncement is taken from the *Kurier* :—

"The interests of Russia and of the Armenian people imperatively suggest as indispensable the creation of an independent Armenia, under the protection of Russia, which should include Cilicia within its boundaries, and such an Armenia would have an outlet on the Mediterranean.

"If no important interests are involved, the mere uncertainty of the juridical position of the semi-independent country will of itself have no fatal results. The possibility of State organisation by means of the material and spiritual forces of Armenians, under the auspices of Russia, presents itself as altogether desirable. This will relieve some of our responsibility, already heavily burdened, from new and enormous expenditure. The economic penetration of foreigners within our sphere of influence cannot frighten us, for the entire transaction should be so arranged that it did not come under the control of foreign political influences. But as a matter of predominance it should be under the control of a Commissioner, or a Russian representative, whose power would be dominant in the Armenia of the future, one who would be supported by the entire authority of Russia.

"It is immaterial to us where our fleet will be located, whether at Sebastopol, the Dardanelles or Alexandretta, all this will have no effect upon the ultimate issue and is immaterial; the essential point at issue will not be affected."

"Alien Enemies" become Alien Friends.

In our article of last month on the "Alien Enemy" question, we wrote strongly on the necessity for early action on the part of the Government, and expressed our belief that by the issue of a new Order in Council, with responsible Armenians to vouch for individuals as beyond suspicion, the anomalous position of Turkish-Armenians in this country could easily be obviated.

Our hopes and expectations were soon realised, and by the end of the first week in January there appeared in the London papers the following notification, which fully meets all the claims we have advanced :—

ALIENS ORDER AMENDED.

It is notified in a Supplement to the *London Gazette* that the Privy Council have made an Order amending the Aliens Restriction (Consolidation) Order, 1914. It is now provided that the following shall be inserted after article 25A of the principal Order :—

"A registration officer may, subject to the general or special instructions of the Secretary of State, grant to a Turkish subject resident in his registration district, who is shown to his satisfaction to be by race a Greek, Armenian, or Syrian, or a member of any other community well known as opposed to the Turkish régime, and to be a Christian, a certificate of exemption from all or any of the provisions of this part of this Order, except such as apply to alien friends.

"Any such certificate shall be operative throughout the United Kingdom, but may be revoked by the registration officer who granted it, or by the registration officer of any district in which the holder is for the time being resident."

The new Order is to be known as the Aliens Restriction (Armenians, &c.) Order, 1915.

For this act of grace the British Government is entitled to the warmest gratitude of all Armenians in the British Isles, who are no longer under the stigma of being classed with the enemies of the country, but take up the rôle of "alien friends."

Last month we tendered our thanks to those English Members of Parliament and friends who had interested themselves in the matter on our behalf, and we specially named Mr. Aneurin Williams, M.P., and Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P. We should also bring to notice the name of Mr. C. T. Needham, M.P., of Manchester, whose interest in Armenians residing in England has always been manifested in the best of spirit, and he is deserving of our warmest thanks for the share he took in the settlement of this matter.

On the promulgation of this Order in Council, no time was lost in making arrangements for putting it into force. With the ready approval of the Home Office and Police authorities, two Representative Armenian Committees were formed, one for London and the other for Manchester, which were empowered to grant Certificates of Nationality to all Armenians applying for them, with whose antecedents and loyalty the Committees were satisfied. On the presentation of these Certificates to the Registration Officers, the applicants were to be supplied with certificates of exemption, if the Police had no reason for such being withheld. This work of granting Nationality Certificates began on January 18th, and is still being continued with the happiest of results.

The following notice, which was issued by the Representative Armenian Committees of London and Manchester to all Armenians whose addresses were known, will place on record the procedure adopted with the approval of the Home Office, and may also be of service to those who, by accident, have not already seen the notice.



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ALIENS RESTRICTION (ARMENIANS, &c.) ORDER,
1915.

Under the above Order Armenians may obtain from the Registration Officers exemption from the provisions of the Aliens Restriction Order applying to alien enemies. For the purposes of such exemption, the Home Office has approved of the acceptance by Registration Officers of a Certificate issued by the Representative Armenian Committee of London or Manchester, showing that the holder is an Armenian by race, and a Christian by religion.

It is accordingly hereby notified that those Armenians who have been registered as "alien enemies," or who are Turkish subjects not yet registered as such, should apply to the Secretary of the Committee (London or Manchester), which is nearest to their place of residence, for a certificate of nationality and identity. When the party so applying is not personally known to the Secretary, or to any member of the Committee, he or she should produce either a personal reference from a responsible member of the Armenian community who is known to the Committee, or such documentary evidence as will clearly establish the applicant's nationality and identity.

An applicant, on being furnished with the necessary Certificate by the Committee, will present it before the Registration Officer and apply for exemption from the provisions of the Aliens Restriction Orders which relate to alien enemies.

The Representative Armenian Committees for London and Manchester, approved by His Grace, Kevork Utudjian, Archbishop of Armenians in Western Europe, have been formed and the names of the members duly communicated to the authorities. The Secretaries of these Committees are, for London, Lieut.-Colonel G. M. Gregory, and for Manchester, Mr. H. Kamberian.

The Secretary of the London Committee will attend at the office of the Armenian United Association, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W., daily from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. (Saturdays and Sundays excepted) for the purpose of interviewing, and granting certificates to applicants in well authenticated cases. Where correspondence is necessary, this should be addressed to his private address, 36, Gunterstone Road, West Kensington, W.

The address of the Secretary of the Manchester Committee is 40, Cooper Street, Manchester, where similar action will be taken, and where all correspondence should be addressed.

On behalf of the Representative Armenian Committees of London and Manchester,

G. M. GREGORY, V.D.,
Lieut.-Colonel.

H. KAMBERIAN.

Dated January 13th, 1915.



HAMAZASP.

Commander of the Third Column of the Armenian Volunteer Force.

(Reproduced from "Horizon," of Tiflis.)

A Leader of Men.

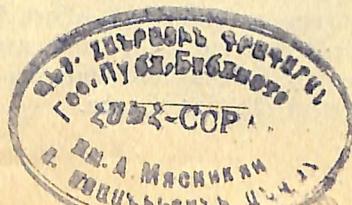
We give a portrait this month of that capable leader, Hamazasp Servantzian, who is at the head of the Third Column of the Armenian Volunteer Force, acting in conjunction with the Russian army against the Turks on the Caucasian frontier of the Turkish Armenian provinces.

A man of action and of pronounced views, he left the best of impressions as to his ability to help his down-trodden fellow countrymen when he was last in London a little more than a year ago. Popularly known as "Hamo," he was born in Van about the year 1874. He is a nephew of the late Garogin Servantzian, bishop and author, and pupil of the late Khrimian, the famous Catholicos.

During the great Armenian massacres of 1895, young Hamo, with other Armenian refugees, fled into Russian Armenia, and led, in the town of Shusha, the ordinary life of a citizen, employing himself in the peaceful occupation of a worker in gold.

When some eight years ago, a rising of the Mohammedan element in the Caucasus wreaked its animosity on the Armenian Christians by attack, pillage and murder, the soul of Hamo rose within him and, casting aside his peaceful avocations, he donned the armour for which nature had fitted him, and went forth at the head of a company of young Armenians he had organised, for defending the hearths and homes which were so seriously jeopardised. With this following of his irregulars he, in no small measure, helped to save the situation, and contributed to the success of his undertaking by many acts of personal bravery. The Tartars saw in him and his band of fighters a power they had to reckon with; and they were so cowed and terrorised that thereafter, and to the present day, they have lived in peace, and have not dared to do harm to the Armenian peasants whose lot was to inhabit villages in their neighbourhood.

Since those stirring times, Hamo has been a fighting member and a leading spirit of the Dashnaksuthium party, an account of whose rise and doings we gave in our last issue. We doubt not that his fame in the present momentous campaign will surpass even the brilliant memories of his encounters against the Tartars of the Caucasus.



Armenian Refugees' Relief Fund.

To my Compatriots—An Appeal.

The fine enthusiasm and robust patriotism with which our kinsmen in the Russian Empire have risen to the need of the hour in this supreme crisis in the history of our nation, as well as of the great empire of which they are loyal citizens have, I hope, finally silenced the dismal pessimists amongst us who never tired of decrying their own nation. Signs are not wanting that the living intensity of that enthusiasm is awakening the national spirit in those Armenians who, born or settled in free lands, prosperous and comfortable, had become indifferent to the fate of their unhappy brethren who have clung to their native soil and mother Church at a cost in blood and suffering we know, alas, too well. Some there are, I am painfully aware, though happily the species is rare, who are sunk so deep in the sloth of self-indulgence that they even stoop to concealing the truth and forsaking the nation that gave them birth in order, as they think, the better to attain some miserable social or material ambition. These are well lost. They are comparable to counterfeit coin, passing themselves for what they are not, and cannot be much of an acquisition to any nation as members of which they masquerade. But those of us, cast by the hand of fate into strange but free and hospitable lands, who strive to tread the only path compatible with honesty and self-respect, to be true to ourselves and the country and people of our origin—how heavy the responsibility that rests upon us at this hour of destiny. The world has never seen such an example of individual sacrifice for the national cause as we witness to-day throughout Europe, especially among the smallest and most sorely tried of the Allies, heroic Belgium, the indomitable Servians and the Montenegrin David. Let their example and that of our brethren and sisters in the Caucasus be our inspiration. Let us bestir ourselves and do our part in our small sphere. Our brothers fighting with the glorious Russian army are proving to the world that the fighting men of our little nation are equal to any in valour and devotion. (Onig Poghosoff disposed of three Germans single-handed and saved his Captain from being taken prisoner, for which act of gallantry he was given the St. George's Order or the Russian V.C.) All they ask of us is material support. Shall we, can we deny it them?

If the noble men and women of this great British nation, who have just issued an appeal and are working strenuously on behalf of our wounded and homeless, feel themselves called upon by their high humanitarian instincts, to spare time and effort for our needs when their own national needs are so many and urgent, how infinitely stronger and more pressing is the call upon us—the triple call of humanity, Christianity, and the ties of race.

Apart from the care of the wounded and the dependents of the fallen and the maimed, the great stream of destitute refugees who are seeking safety over the Russian frontier, must strain to the utmost the resources of our compatriots in the Caucasus. The need is overwhelming and it is pressing. Children, women and old men are starving and are being frozen to death by the score. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians, mostly women and children, in the most extreme stages of destitution have got to be housed, fed, and kept warm in the fearful Caucasian winter. Is it fair, will our conscience allow us to leave the whole of this terrible burden upon the shoulders of our Caucasian kinsmen, whose resources, ready though they are to give their all, must prove inadequate to relieve the sea of distress that prevails? Is it possible to imagine a graver responsibility than that which rests at this juncture upon Armenians—specially well-to-do Armenians—secure within the borders of free lands? I appeal to them all, if appeal is necessary. Let us come forward in one great united effort to succour the sick and wounded and destitute that are crowding the towns and villages, and even the roadsides of Russian Armenia. Fire and sword and the savage fury of Kurd and Turk are claiming enough victims, so let us hasten to the rescue of those who have barely escaped with their lives from the ravages of hunger and cold. If we fail in this most sacred of all duties, then shall it be said with truth that our souls are dead and our hearts turned into stone. The machinery for receiving and forwarding help given to the scene of the grim tragedy—God grant it is the last—enacted under the shadow of Mount Ararat, is ready to hand. Donations may be sent according to instructions which will be found among the *Current Notes*, and donors may be assured of their help being speedily utilised for the required purpose, and through the most reliable Agencies.

A. P. HACOBIAN.

London. January 20th, 1915.

Editorial Note.

We commend the above stirring appeal to all our readers, and we have at the same time the gratification of announcing that at an informal exchange of views among some of the members of the General Council of the Armenian United Association, it was decided to open a Fund forthwith, and substantial sums to meet urgent distress were at once promised. At a meeting of the Council on January 23rd the above action was approved and confirmed, and it was decided to issue a circular appeal to all Armenians in London and neighbourhood, inviting them to support the Fund. This circular is now in the press, and will be duly circulated to all Armenians whose addresses are known. Should this meet the eye of those in distant colonies or elsewhere, who desire to participate in this great and urgent national task by forming local committees for collecting funds, the Association here will gladly receive their donations and will ensure proper disposal.

In the meantime we have the pleasure to announce the receipt of the following subscriptions up to the time of going to press. Further lists will be given in our future issues:

Seth Paul ..	£200	*S. Balthazar ..	£50
Mrs. Seth Paul ..	200	*S. T. Creet ..	50
T. Paul ..	200	H. N. Mosditchian ..	25
Mrs. Hacobian ..	200	"X" ..	15
A. P. Hacobian ..	200	Dr. M. K. Gudenian ..	10
*M. Stephens ..	100	O. Andreasian ..	10
A. M. Zorab ..	100	D. Arslanian ..	10
*T. Arathoon ..	100	Miss Edgar ..	1
S. P. Stephens ..	100		
*Mrs. Edgar ..	50	Total ..	£1,671
*A. S. Mackertich ..	50		

We have further to announce the receipt of a telegram from Armenian members of our Association in Sourabaya, Java, Dutch East Indies, informing us that they have remitted through the Chartered Bank £3,000 to the Treasurer of our Association, which is to be placed at the disposal of His Holiness, the Catholicos, in aid of Armenian wounded volunteers, widows and orphans. This telegram comes over the signatures of Messrs. Edgar, Apcar and Hacobian.

In addition to the above, donations amounting to £10 1s., the equivalent of 100 Yen, have also been received through Mrs. Diana Agabeg Apcar, of Yokohama, Japan, for the relief of Armenian distress. The contributors are the following:—

A Thank-offering ..	Yen 25
Three Sympathisers ..	„ 50
A Friend ..	„ 15
Mrs. E. Wheeler ..	„ 10

Total .. Yen 100 or £10 1 0

The Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund.

Since the account of our inaugural meeting was printed last month it is pleasant to be able to record that our Fund has progressed by leaps and bounds. Viscountess Bryce has graciously consented to be its President, while the Hon. Mrs. Alistair Fraser, Sir Edwin Pears, Sir Edward Boyle, Noel Buxton, M.P., E. Wright Brooks (Hon. Treasurer of "Friends of Armenia"), and Prof. Hagopian, have kindly added their names to the list of Vice-Presidents. Mr. Richard Robinson, of Manchester, has joined the General Committee, of which Lieut.-Col. Gregory kindly consents to act as chairman.

* 25 per cent. of these subscriptions are destined to go to the Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund.

An appeal signed by Lady Henry Somerset, Lady Frederick Cavendish and Viscount Bryce, on behalf of the Fund, appeared in the *Times* and other London newspapers on Jan. 12th, to which there has been a good response. Nearly £500 has been received and more than 500 garments for volunteers and refugees. The greater number of the clothes are hand-knitted or sewn, and are of excellent workmanship and warm texture.

The Hon. Treasurer is cabling a first instalment of money (£200) to our Consul-General at Moscow to-day, with a request that he should pass this on to the Mayor of Tiflis, who is President of the Relief Committee there, to be equally divided between relief work among the refugees and medical necessities for Armenian volunteers.

Thanks to the great courtesy and generosity of the Russian Government, the cost of packing and transit of the garments is being borne entirely by them. They have just sent for the first consignment of over 500 articles of warm clothing, which they are most kindly forwarding as expeditiously as possible direct to Tiflis.

One knew already that there was much sympathy all over the kingdom with the sufferings of Armenia. This Fund is proving what a practical form that sympathy takes. Most of the cheques and parcels are accompanied by kind and touching messages, while many show that the senders have not given of that which cost them nothing. Extracts from some letters may be of interest. The Rev. Harold Buxton writes: "I have much pleasure in sending £5 to the Armenian Red Cross Fund, with every good wish for so noble a cause." A Wesleyan minister encloses £1 in a kind letter saying: "Keep Armenia before the public. I am trying so to do in my public work continually. I wish I could make this more, but I may be able to repeat it later. God bless you in this work." An Armenian lady says: "The enclosed amount is the result of a schoolgirl's effort. Araxi C. (aged 12) wished to do something, and her friends readily joined. They formed a little concert with a little help added to their school repertoire. The proceeds are for the warm clothing fund for the Armenian volunteers and to keep away the frost-bite, as a little girl said." Someone evidently in very humble circumstances writes: "A small trifle is enclosed with deepest pity for the Armenian refugees' sad plight." A very generous friend of Armenia wrote: "It seems evident that this Fund is a most proper object for our attention just at present, and I am enclosing £50 for it." (He has since sent a second cheque for the same amount.) A young girl from Birmingham writes: "Seeing your appeal for Armenian Refugees' Fund I am sending 1s. order made from little wool gollywogs, with good wishes for your work." One of the most touching letters containing 9d. in stamps is from an inmate of a County Lunatic Asylum who has seen the appeal and wishes to do something, so he sends all the money he has. A letter enclosing a small money order reads: "I wish it were more, but I am one who has to watch every penny I spend. Still, one feels one must do what one can when one reads of such terrible suffering." Another letter which

is signed "A Poor Working Woman," says: "Will you kindly spend the enclosed 2s. 6d. in something that you think will be useful for the poor things. As I am living in a little village I have not the chance of getting useful things, so I should feel obliged if you will kindly do it for me."

The largest parcel of garments (94 articles) came from the Armenian Ladies' Guild, a delightful collection of warm mufflers, pretty children's frocks and caps, etc. The Women's Relief Corps at Westbourne Park, connected with Dr. Clifford's Chapel, sent a number of beautifully-made frocks, jerseys, etc., with a kind letter from Miss Selby, their minute-secretary. Archdeacon Potter sent a box of mufflers, socks and mittens, beautifully knitted, apparently by village children, the name of the maker being stitched on each article. Two American ladies sent some lovely woolly comforters. Two fine white woollen jerseys for girls of 16 or 18, which would grace a princess, bear cards with the words "With love from England" (the cards now bear the same words written also in Armenian). A lady at St. Leonards whose husband is an Armenian, sends some warm gloves, socks and mufflers, all with a label stitched on, bearing the words in Armenian, "A little gift from an Armenian friend." Some parcels contain work done by girls' clubs and classes and are sent by the ladies who organised them. Many senders promise further contributions. Everything will be gratefully received, as we hope to keep our Fund open while need for it lasts. Need for help could not be more urgent than it is, for accounts of the distress in the Caucasus are simply heartrending.

If these lines perchance reach the eyes of anyone living at San Francisco or anywhere near the Pacific coast of the United States, will he or she try to rouse interest and get help for Armenian refugees and for the Red Cross work among Armenian soldiers in that neighbourhood? This suggestion has been made to me by an American friend from New York, the west coast of the United States being more accessible to Russia now than the east coast. If an American branch of the Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund, or an independent fund of like character, could be started we should be only too delighted to give any necessary information as to needs and the simple working. The Hon. Treasurer of the Fund is Mr. H. A. Godson Bohn, 17, Holland Villas Road, Kensington, London, who will thankfully receive donations: or these could be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Miss E. J. Robinson, 35a, Elsham Road, Kensington, London, W. Gifts of warm clothing especially socks and stockings, shirts, shawls, frocks, or anything for men, women or children, will be gratefully received and acknowledged by the Hon. Secretary at above address.

EMILY J. ROBINSON.

The following is the appeal published in the London papers of January 12th, to which Miss Robinson refers in the above article:—

THE ARMENIAN RED CROSS.
To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR,—We are asking the public to support the above work, which is in need of immediate assistance. There are now in the field more than 8,000 Armenian volunteers fighting for the Russians in Turkey; 5,000 more are in the United States ready to sail. They have been equipped and are maintained by Armenians all over the world at a cost of £6,000 per day. By the spring it is expected that there will be between 20,000 and 25,000 altogether in the field. At present they have no doctor, and there are only five untrained Armenian ladies assisting as nurses. Fifteen medical students from Kieff are now on their way to the front to assist, but there are no Red Cross appliances of any sort, and these are urgently needed. There has been heavy fighting around Bashkale, which the volunteers have captured, supported by columns of Russian Regulars mainly composed of Armenians. The snow is 3ft. deep, and there have been many very serious cases of frostbite. There are now 12,000 Armenian refugees at Sarikamysch alone to be provided for. These are being cared for as far as possible for the moment by the Russian Armenian inhabitants, who are themselves very poor owing to floods having spoilt their last crops. Hundreds of old men, women, and children have tramped through the snow without shoes or stockings, these articles having been seized by Turkish soldiers, who have been billeted in their houses. In many instances these wretched people were driven out just as they were by the Turkish soldiers as they entered the villages. The Catholicos (head of the Armenian Church) and his clergy, with local committees, are rendering all the assistance possible, but they have no funds left, all the money subscribed by Armenians having to go to the upkeep of the volunteers.

The Armenian Society, composed of British and American people, is administering the Red Cross and Refugee Fund free of all cost, while the British Consul-General at Moscow is co-operating. The Russian authorities are separating the fugitives as much as possible, as it is feared there may be an outbreak of disease, owing to their famished and impoverished condition. It is to the generous heart of the great British public that we make this appeal. Donations of money may be sent to the hon. treasurer, Mr. H. A. Godson Bohn, at 17, Holland Villas Road, Kensington, or to the hon. secretary, Miss E. J. Robinson, at 35a, Elsham Road, Kensington. Gifts of warm woollen clothing including mufflers, gloves, cardigans, stockings, socks, and bandages for the volunteers, and warm garments of any kind and boots in good condition for the refugees will be gratefully received and acknowledged by the hon. secretary.

ISABEL SOMERSET.
LUCY C. F. CAVENDISH
(President, "Friends of Armenia").
BRYCE.

We would also draw attention to the following telegram just received, which we have been privileged to attach to this article:—

TIFLIS. Jan. 20th.

"Miss Robinson, *Ararat*, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London.

"Probably the awful condition of the Armenians in these last days is well known to you from the telegrams. Hundred thousand of refugees are in a deplorable state, tramping over 125 miles in cold and terrible frost. Many lose their lives. There is dreadful sickness among the starving and feeble children. The Society of the Caucasian Armenian Ladies is not able to relieve all this distress. Knowing from the papers your kindness to Armenian people, we ask you to help us materially. No matter how small, it will be a satisfaction to know there are kind people who interest themselves in our troubles.—President, ARAX ARSOUMANOF."

"Holy War" and the Turks.

Of the many German miscalculations in connection with the war, perhaps one of the greatest has been the expectation that by securing the complicity of the Turks, the Sultan, as the self-styled holder of the Caliphate, would become a potent tool in their hands for the proclamation of a "holy war" among the Moslems of the world, thus striking a vital blow at the Allied Powers in India, Egypt, the Caucasus, Algeria, Morocco, etc., where large numbers of Moslems dwell; the action was more particularly levelled at Great Britain, which shelters under her wing the largest proportion of Mohammedans in the world. We have in our recent numbers, especially in *Ararat* of September last, pointed out in what aspect the Moslem world has viewed this extraordinary attempt of a Christian Power to tamper with the heads of a mighty religion, and we drew special attention to the effect produced in India, whence came the news that the highest Moslem authority in those parts was prepared to raise, not seventy thousand, but seven millions of Indian troops to fight against England's enemies. This was a staggering blow to German machinations, and the blows have been since redoubled by the recognised heads of Moslem communities in the Soudan and in Egypt, through their published statements to the British authorities in Egypt, of their attitude towards Turkey.



In this connection of the right of the Sultan of Turkey to proclaim a "holy war," we reproduce the following communication made to the *New York Herald* by Mr. P. Tonapetean, an Armenian of the London colony, who has but recently made a trip to the United States and is now back again in London:—

That the Sultan of Turkey has no religious or legal right to proclaim a "holy war," as he is not the head of the Moslem Church, is a statement made here yesterday by Peter Tonapetean, a newspaper man from Constantinople. Mr. Tonapetean asserts that references in newspapers, here and abroad, to the Sultan's alleged "holy war" simply play into the hands of the Turks.

"Since the sixteenth century," said Mr. Tonapetean, "there has been no real Caliphate. Every Mohammedan country has its own religious head, the Sherif. For political purposes the Sultans of Turkey sometimes assert themselves to be caliphs, but they are not; it was the Ottomans who themselves abolished the caliphate.

"Only one Sherif, the Sherif of Mecca, who is a descendant of Mohammed, can lay claim to the caliphate.

"Heads of the Mussulmans in other countries will not recognise the right of the Sultan of Turkey to proclaim a 'holy war'; as they will take it, and properly so, to be an infringement on their rights, and illegal. For that matter, so far as the Arabs and Persians are concerned, they surely will not obey the Sultan's religious dictation. The Persians are of another sect of the Mohammedan Church, the Shi'ites, whereas the Turks are Sunnites, and there is bitter religious feeling between them. The Arabs believe themselves to be persecuted by the Turks.

"Mussulmans in Algeria, in the Caucasus, in India, all have their own religious heads, whose dictates, and not those of the Turkish Sheikh-ul-Islam, rule them. The Sultan himself cannot call a 'holy war' without the sanction of the Sheikh-ul-Islam of Turkey, although the latter is his own appointee.

"That the Mohammedans of the world will rise at the call of the Sultan of Turkey is, therefore, most improbable, although perhaps their sympathies might to a certain point be with the Turks as co-religionists. But they would resent any interference in their own religious affairs by any one who, like the Sultan, has no legal right.

"Newspaper articles referring to the Sultan's appeal to arms are simply doing just what the Turks want, namely, recognizing the Sultan's right to be the caliph, and articles of this tenor may do much harm by indicating, to Moslem eyes, the recognition by Christians of a claim of the Sultan which is not recognized by Moslems themselves."

Apart from this view of the Sultan's position as a pseudo-Caliph, attempts to stir up religious fanaticism even in the outlying limits of the Ottoman Empire have generally failed. The German Consul at

Damascus, who was present at the Omayyad Mosque when the Holy War was proclaimed, must needs address the congregation after the proclamation had been read, but, so far from arousing enthusiasm, his efforts had a chilling effect.

And so far as Indian Moslems are concerned when in close touch with Turkish authorities, these latter have failed to shake their absolute loyalty to the British. Eighteen Indian Moslem British subjects, imprisoned at Adana, had every inducement offered to them to become Turkish subjects and to join the enemy's forces, but all steadfastly refused to be unfaithful to their salt.

Then we have again the Press Bureau reporting from a trustworthy source in Damascus that the Sheikh at the great Omayyad Mosque in Damascus, after the sermon on a certain Friday, took off his turban, threw it down on to the pavement, and cried out to the people, "Tread on it." All present shouted, "God forbid!" The Sheikh continued, "Yet it is better to tread on my turban than to murder in cold blood the Christians who, like us, pay tribute to our Sultan. This war is no *Jehad*, but one of Christians against Christians, and you must remember that the Prophet forbade us to commit murder, and particularly enjoined upon us to be kind and serviceable to our neighbours."

"At Home"

OF THE

Armenian United Association of London,

Held at the Elysee Hall, Queen's Road, W., on Sunday,
January 17th, 1915.

The last social function of the Association took place so far back as July 12th. The outbreak of the war, with its attendant horrors, so absorbed the minds of all that it seemed unsuitable to resume these festive gatherings in October. The third week in January, however, brought with it the excuse for breaking the ice, and, accordingly, on January 17th, the nearest Sunday to the Christmas Day of the Armenian Church, a goodly number of Armenians and their friends mustered to hear excellent music, to exchange views on the stirring events that are happening and on the future, and also to emphasise that subtle feeling which forms the basis of national unity.

The musical programme was admirably adapted for the occasion:

PIANOFORTE SOLO —

(a) Bagatelle—Opus 126 } Beethoven.
(b) Capriccio.
"The Wrath over the lost Farthing."

Miss ADELA HAMATON.

SONG "O! Divine Redeemer" .. Gounod.
Miss ETHEL BILSLAND.

PIANOFORTE SOLOS—

Three Studies Chopin.
Miss ADELA HAMATON.

SONG "The Lord is my life" .. Allitson.
Miss ETHEL BILSLAND.

Miss Adela Hamaton, who charmed us by her playing last May, is now looked upon as an old favourite, and she was greeted as an old favourite should be. She made her "Bluthner" respond to the occasion, and Beethoven and Chopin could have wished for no better exponent of the harmony that they have made memorable for future generations. This was Miss Ethel Bilsland's first appearance on our platform, and her marvellous *soprano* and clear enunciation held the audience spell-bound. They longed for more of it, but their desires had to give way to the inexorable limit of time.

The above programme was interspersed with addresses until the hour fixed for tea. The audience were fortunate in hearing the voice of Sir Edwin Pears, a "refugee" from Constantinople, as he styled himself, whose long years in that city has made him a staunch friend of Armenians, and whose words were listened to with profound attention. We give below an abstract of some of the addresses.

The PRESIDENT thus opened the proceedings:—

There has been an unfortunate break in these social functions of ours, the last one having been held so far back as July 12th—but you know the reason for this. The interval has been filled with momentous happenings all the world over, and it was not considered seemly that we should continue our monthly festive gatherings while the peace of the world was disturbed, and distress and agony prevailed at our very doors.

So long as the war was restricted to Germany and Austria-Hungary on the one side and the Allied Powers of the Triple Entente, with Serbia, Montenegro and Japan on the other, Armenians remained as interested spectators in this country, though they were conscious that their fellow-countrymen of the Caucasus in large numbers, and smaller bands in the armies of the other Allies were involved in shedding their blood on the side of freedom against the powers of despotism; and they were conscious, too, that when freedom and justice won the day—as win they must—there would dawn a new era for their country as well. The entry of Turkey into the ranks of the combatants brought Armenians at once into the thick of the fray. The Power that had persecuted them for so many centuries, the Power that had refused to grant them the most elementary rights of mankind, had now taken its stand definitely on the side of the ruthless devastators of small nationalities. Though a sense of elation came over us that at last the Turk had over-reached himself and had dug his own grave, yet we were not without a deep sense of the gravity of the situation. It meant an intense period of agony and of suffering for those of our fellow-countrymen who were scattered in large numbers throughout the Turkish Empire; the helplessness of their surroundings came vividly before us. The plundering by lawless Moslem bands; the flight of the aged, of the women and children in the relentless rigours of a wintry climate; the massacres of those helpless Christians who could not take to flight—these were visions that passed before our eyes as the inevitable consequences of the entry of Turkey into the war. It may be the last terrible ordeal through which our nation has to pass, and I feel it is, but, nevertheless, it will probably be the most terrible in all her checkered history.

Though Russia, the great Titan that is fighting mighty armies on all her western frontiers, has already inflicted one crushing blow on the Turks who had ventured to cross the borders of Transcaucasia, I fear the evils we have dreaded have taken definite shape, and plunderings, flights and massacres of Armenians of all classes are taking place on an extensive scale in a region which is steeped in anarchy and fanaticism.

How are we to prevent all this? And can we even mitigate these terrible sufferings? It is no use railing at the Great Powers for permitting during the past decades the existence of a festering sore in the very midst of civilisation. Armenians know to what extent they have been made the sport of international jealousies. But now is the time to heal the wounded, to feed and to clothe the homeless, to strengthen and to accelerate the striking power of the avenging armies, so as to minimise the cruel deeds that are being perpetrated. Towards this end, Armenians are flocking to the colours of the Russian forces; such of them as have crossed the frontiers are forming volunteer bands of their own with Russian support, and are shedding their blood freely for justice and for freedom. The whole community in Russia has been stirred to its depths for the relief of their kinsfolk, and money has been

pouring in from all directions for hospitals and Red Cross work, for food and clothing for the destitute refugees who are crossing the Russian borders in their tens of thousands, too numerous to be dealt with satisfactorily. Our gratitude is due to our English friends for having started their special Armenian Red Cross Society. Their appeal in the papers was strongly backed by names that are cherished by Armenians, and we wish them all the success their great efforts merit. Our own countrymen here are also doing all they can to soften the lot of their afflicted brethren. I have just had a letter from Manchester to say that funds are being collected which will be immediately remitted to the Catholicos for urgent needs; and an appeal to London Armenians for a similar purpose is now being launched. But our greatest anxiety must needs be for the helpless within Turkish territory, and I fear no helping hand can be stretched out to them except the speedy advance of the Russian forces, and in that alone we must place our implicit trust.

A matter which has much disturbed the Armenian mind in England since the outbreak of war with Turkey has been the question of alien disabilities. It was necessarily technical and automatic, but it was none the less vexatious, and has caused much heart-burning that a race which has suffered so much at the hands of the Turks should be placed in the same category as their persecutors, and treated as "alien enemies" in this country. The aspect of the matter was not merely one of sentiment. Its financial effect on our Manchester friends was disastrous to a degree, while numbers lost the means of earning their livelihood. However, thanks to the efforts of our many friends, and especially to those of the British Armenia Committee and its Chairman, Mr. Aneurin Williams, M.P., and also of His Excellency Count Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador, these disabilities have, after two months of steady pressure, been removed. I am happy to be able to tell you that Representative Armenian Committees have been appointed for London and Manchester, and that these Committees have been empowered by the Home Office to grant Certificates of Nationality to Armenians as to whose character and identity the Committees are satisfied. The production of these Certificates before the Registration Officer will entitle Armenians to Certificates of exemption from alien disabilities. The arrangements for bringing this procedure into practice are now complete, and we intend to start the work of granting these Certificates from to-morrow. This is a great and troublesome task accomplished, and though it has been late in coming, we may reckon on it as a suitable Christmas gift.

I must not bring this address to a close without adding a word of thanks to those members of the Armenian Ladies' Guild who have been working strenuously in the making of warm clothing, scarves, etc., for Armenian soldiers and refugees. These are being forwarded to France and to Russia as parcels are made up; and the Ladies may rest assured that their kindly efforts are bringing comfort to many a fellow-countryman either fighting in the cause of right, or reduced to destitution under cruel circumstances.

I need not trespass further on your time with what has been uppermost in our minds. This day was fixed upon for our gathering as it was the nearest Sunday to the Armenian Christmas Day, January 19th. It is a festival heralding Peace and Good-will, and though we cannot say at the moment that the world is blessed in superabundance with these Christian virtues, it is nevertheless fighting a good fight against the powers of darkness, and we have a right to look forward to the day, not far distant I hope, which will be the real harbinger of peace and good-will, not of a transitory nature, but one the continuance of which will be ensured for all time, and in which nations, whether large or small, will be permitted to live their lives and shape their progress in accordance with their cherished traditions, social, religious and linguistic; and in this great revival, or coming into their own, we doubt not that Armenia, with her cruel record of persecution and martyrdom through centuries, will rise once more into a position which she is entitled to hold through the keen capacity of her sons and her daughters, the true pioneers of civilisation in Western Asia. To this end, then, we hail Christmas Day of 1915—the prophetic forerunner of the Peace and Good-will that are to be.

Sir EDWIN PEARS said he was the last refugee from Constantinople, and he was glad to have an opportunity of addressing an Armenian Society in London. The last time he addressed an Armenian meeting was in a town in Asia Minor, which he will not mention here. He was invited there by an Armenian educational society, and was entertained among the beautiful vineyards of the town.

The educational efforts of the Armenians, their struggle for improving the moral and economic condition of their people, were destined to produce far-reaching results on the nation as a whole. He had himself noticed with admiration and amazement this thirst for education among the porters and others working on the quays and in the towns. To the efforts of the Armenians themselves was given an enormous impetus by the labours of American missionaries, and such action, combined though on independent lines, was bound to result in a great up-lifting of national thought, and presaged a momentous change in the national life in the not very distant future.

Just at this moment clouds were lowering upon the horizon, and Armenians in Turkey are passing through a time of supreme trial. These are bad times and they entail very great hardship and suffering on them. Yet, a new era of freedom and progress, not only for Armenians but for the whole of Turkey, was now visibly in sight, and through those dark clouds of the present one could discern the dawn. With the advent of this new era for unfortunate Armenians and their sorely tried fatherland he might well be permitted to sing his *Nunc dimittis*.

MR. ARTHUR G. SYMONDS, Secretary of the British Armenia Committee, said:—Friends, I have been asked to say a few words to you, but as an old friend, Sir Edwin Pears, has said all that was in my heart, I can but add how I rejoice to think that at last what has been an old man's dream—Armenia's freedom—seems about to be realised. Since the days when our Grand Old Chief, at whose feet I learnt my politics, tried so much and vainly to awaken England to the duty she owed to your oppressed people, never has there seemed so bright a prospect of your countrymen being rescued from the evil genius of Turkey. There may be still much to suffer, much to endure, but the darkness, the night, it passeth, the dawn is at hand; and I am glad to think that I may yet see a progressive Armenia—a free Armenia—when the persecutions, the horrors and massacres shall be as a dream that is past, never to return.

Prof. G. HAGOPIAN also spoke in a patriotic strain, and gave point to his remarks by quoting largely from the Prayer of Intercession.

During the Meeting opportunity was taken by Mr. D. ARSLANIAN, in an eloquent speech, to present, on behalf of the Turkish Armenians of London and Manchester, a handsome cup to the President for his efforts on behalf of the nation, more particularly in connection with the settlement of the “alien enemy” question. Lieut.-Colonel Gregory acknowledged in warmest terms the honour done him, but deprecated the idea that the personal efforts of any single individual, in matters political or otherwise, could accomplish success. It was unanimous, cordial and harmonious support that was needed, and in this instance he thanked all his friends for having bestowed that ungrudgingly. And, if a cup were necessary, and he had had a voice in the matter, he would have bestowed one on each of his supporters.

The Inscription on the cup reads as follows:—

Presented To
Lieut.-Colonel G. M. GREGORY, V.D.,
By
London & Manchester Armenians
as a slight token
Of Their Esteem & Respect.
January, 1915.

Announcements.

THE ARMENIAN UNITED ASSOCIATION OF LONDON.

In accordance with Rule 22 of the Rules of the Association, the Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, January 30th, 1915, at the Elysée Hall, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.

The Meeting will begin at 3.30 p.m. punctually.

Only Members of the Association who have paid their subscriptions in full for the year 1914, or for the year 1915 in the case of new Members, will be entitled to attend this Meeting and to vote.

The ordinary business before the Meeting will be:—

- (i) To receive the report of the President for the year 1914, together with a statement of accounts.
- (ii) To elect three members to serve on the General Council in place of three of the oldest members, who will retire in accordance with the Association's Rule 17.

At a Meeting of the General Council, held on December 26th last, lots were drawn for the retirement of the three Members, and they fell on Mrs. Raffi and Mr. J. G. Joakim, Vice-Presidents, and Mr. A. P. Hacobian, Treasurer. These retiring members of the General Council are eligible for re-election.

- (iii) The filling up of the three vacancies, two of Vice-President and one of Treasurer, from among the members of the General Council when completed.

Notice has been given to the President under Rule 24 of the intention to bring forward the following proposals at this Meeting:—

- (a) That two weeks after the Annual General Meeting called by the Association on January 30th, there be called by notice of the Association or otherwise a General Meeting of the London Colony of Armenians, without distinction of class and creed, including subjects of all Powers, for purposes of discussing questions of National interest at such General Meeting.

Proposed by Mr. Arshak Raffi,
Seconded by Miss Z. C. Boyajian.

- (b) That the Association should immediately find out the position of destitute Armenians in this country, and make it their first duty to see that during the present crisis they are properly looked after, and that work be found for them; and for this purpose that a temporary Committee be formed to organise assistance.

Proposed by Mr. Arshak Raffi,
Seconded by Mr. M. Gaulstan.

- (c) That the Chairman at any General Meeting be elected by the majority of members present, in person (not by proxy), at such meetings.

Proposed by Mr. Arshak Raffi,
Seconded by Mr. Ardash (A. Dimijian).

Tea will be provided during the Meeting.

By order of the General Council,

M. K. GUDENIAN,
Hon. Secretary.

44, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BAYSWATER, W.
January, 21st, 1915.

NOTICE.

A Lantern Lecture will be given at Leighton House, Holland Park Road, Kensington, W., on Thursday, February 11th, at 5 p.m. (doors open at 4.30 p.m.), by E. T. A. Wigram, Esq., on "The Cradle of Mankind." Sir Edwin Pears will preside.

Seats: Reserved, 2s. 6d.; unreserved, 1s. 6d. Tickets may be obtained from Miss E. J. Robinson, 35a, Elsham Road, Kensington, W., or Mrs. G. M. Gregory, 36, Gunterstone Road, West Kensington, W.

The proceeds of this lecture will be devoted to the aid of the Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund.

There will be an "At Home" of the Armenian United Association on Sunday, February 28th, from 3.30 to 6.30 p.m., at the Elysée Hall, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.

A lecture will be delivered by Mr. W. Llewelyn Williams, late Editor of "The Sunday Strand," on *The Passing of Turkey*.

The lecture will begin at 3.45, and members and their friends are earnestly requested to be in their seats punctually, so as to avoid distracting the attention of the lecturer when he has once begun.

ARMENIAN YOUNG MEN'S CLUB OF MANCHESTER.

The items of the programme of this Society for the remainder of the Session at West Didsbury Public Hall, are as follows:—

Jan. 31.—Sunday, 3.15 p.m. *Debate*, "Is it possible for Powers to settle their disputes by Arbitration?"
D. Gulbenkian, Esq., aff.
S. Damadian, Esq., neg.

Feb. 14.—Sunday, 3.0 p.m. *Members' Meeting*.

Feb. 21.—Sunday, 3.30 p.m. *Address*, by T. Alinack, Esq.

Mar. 14.—Sunday, 3.15 p.m. *Debate*, “Are the Armenians patriotic?”

L. Tufenkjian, Esq., aff.

A. Kalpakdjian, Esq., neg.

Mar. 21.—Sunday, 3.0 p.m. *Members' Meeting*.

Apr. 4.—Sunday, 3.15 p.m. *Debate*, “Is militarism consistent with true civilisation?”

M. A. Arabian, Esq., aff.

K. Funduklian, Esq., neg.

Apr. 18.—Sunday, 3.0 p.m. *Members' Meeting*.

The end of the Winter Session is to be followed by a Picnic in the Summer; and, in addition, the members of the Club have their own Gatherings on Sunday afternoons at the Hall, and their Football Team plays regularly on Saturday afternoons.

All Armenians are cordially invited, *free*; but those desirous of encouraging the Club may pay a yearly subscription.

Literary Section.

ARMENIA: HER PEOPLE AND HISTORY.

(Continued from p. 223.)

II.

Under this new Moslem dispensation Christians have had no legal status whatever. They are looked upon as a mere herd of cattle—*rayahs* as they call them. However clever and intelligent a Christian may be, he is never equal, in the eyes of the law, to a Moslem, who alone retains the use of arms, and is entitled to the best of everything an Infidel may possess. All the good things of this world, as well as those of the next, if any, from the Turkish Paradise peopled with gauze-clad houris down to all the glories of this “fleeting” world, are made only for the worthy followers of the Prophet. This may not be the exact interpretation of the “Koranic doctrine,” or rather the theory of Moslem theology; nevertheless, in practice, these Christian disabilities are upheld to the full.

As a favour, however, Armenians were allowed a certain amount of toleration in religious worship, in compensation for which they had to toil in every way possible, in order to maintain the lazy and stupid Turk. Yet, notwithstanding all these compulsory restrictions affecting their social and physical life, Armenians, through centuries of persecution and servitude, have kept the fundamental features of their morals

almost intact and unmixed; their habits of thought, customs and general outlook on life have remained practically unchanged and unaffected, though in daily contact with a race of absolutely alien character. The enormous differences of religion, morals and modes of thought have doubtless helped our people to keep aloof from everything that had a tinge of Moslem character about it. They still cling to almost the same beliefs and prejudices which used to be those of their ancestors, some fifteen hundred years ago, with the addition of a religious fervour which may fairly be termed amazing.

Some of the beliefs and prejudices in question, a short description of which follows, date back even to heathen times, or are the Christianized forms of heathen customs, and have come down to us with local variations or additions; and even to this day they are found to be in force in mountainous districts like Sassoun, Zeitoun, Vozim, etc., though these places have been overrun time and again by Turks, who have never yet succeeded in subduing them. One may perhaps take the peasants of these semi-independent districts as characteristic types.

(i) *Childbirth and the Child*. Before being baptised, a new-born child is supposed to be still in original sin. If he dies before baptism, he is said to have been doomed. The sacrament of baptism usually takes place within three weeks after birth. The infant is taken to the font by a Godfather, such sponsorship being looked upon as hereditary among friendly families, and is carried on from generation to generation though changes are occasionally made. The officiating priest questions the godfather about the vows he wishes to take for the infant, and as a rule his answer refers to Faith, Hope and Love, or Wisdom, or it may be something of a kindred form. Then the infant is immersed in the holy water by the priest, who meanwhile goes through the necessary prayers. The child is given a Christian name at the baptism, and the ceremony is made to include at the same time both communion and confirmation.

As to the mother, her environment is supposed to be filled with evil spirits, and she herself is held to be liable to their evil influences; she is never left alone in her room, and some wear talismans, such as little crosses, to repel such evil spirits. For forty days she must not see the sunlight, which by tradition is said to be prejudicial to her health and speedy recovery. One may fairly assume that this belief in the existence of evil spirits in a mother's birth-chamber has come down from the times when Armenia was Zoroastrian, though naturally it has vanished in towns where modern ideas are rapidly penetrating.

(ii) *Marriage*. Betrothal during childhood seems to have been the rule in ancient and mediæval times, as well as quite up to recent times among the peasantry. Almost every male and female gets married between the ages of 18 and 30, usually between 18 and 25. Any girl who does not get married before the age of 25, has little chance of doing so later.

The day of the wedding is announced by the bridegroom's people in a special solemn letter addressed to the bride's people, and the rejoicings and ceremony begin, as a rule, two or three days before the day of the wedding. In the bridegroom's house, as well as in the bride's, young men particularly disport themselves with noisy festivities. The first act of the ceremony is the election, by common consent, of an *Azpaklukh*, or chief of the bachelors, who is at the same time invested with a large wand as a symbol of power. Throughout the wedding festivities he acts as the master of ceremonies, or toast-master, and he is the organiser of all functions; everyone obeys his instructions, and he becomes the object of general respect and attention.

On the eve of the wedding-day, the bridegroom sends the bride a veil, a pair of boots, etc., which she must wear the next day when entering the bridegroom's home. These are sent in a basket which is also filled with flowers and all sorts of candies and sweets as a present to her relations. The carrier of the basket is at the same time the bearer of an official letter from the parents of the bridegroom, informing the parents of the bride of the time they intend to arrive on the following or wedding-day, in order to fetch the bride. The bridal procession is formed in the house of the bridegroom, and it usually starts in the afternoon in carriages, if available, or on horses and sledges if the ground is covered with snow; the procession is naturally accompanied by a band of local musicians. These processions are as a rule very large, and often fill all the rooms in the bride's house. The guests are entertained and toasts are proposed to the happiness of the couple about to be wedded. Then the nuptial garments are blessed by a priest at a public ceremony; this is followed by the dressing of the bride, and the procession, considerably augmented by those from the bride's side, wends its way to the church, where the sacrament of wedlock is read in front of the altar and in the presence of all the guests. The mother is, as a rule, represented at the church by a substitute, a relative of hers, who follows the bride into the bridegroom's house and stays there almost to the end of the festivities.

When the bride enters her new home, she is greeted by her mother-in-law as the "Queen of the home," good wishes are showered on her, accompanied by folk-songs which seem centuries old, and there is a sacrifice of a lamb. Roast lamb is the traditional dish of the wedding day, with a profusion of wines, all of which is, of course, native produce. If by accident some vessel or china is broken, this is looked upon as the best of auguries, typifying the death-blow to all misfortunes which might befall the newly-wed couple; but the breakage should be accidental and not premeditated, otherwise it may not be effective.

The rejoicings and festivities at the bridegroom's house are carried on for another day or two, as his circumstances may permit. The officiating priest calls to give his last benedictions to the couple, as well as his spiritual advice as to their mutual happiness, and departs with the orange-coloured symbols of Hymen, which he had placed on the heads of the bride and bridegroom in the church. The guests then disperse, restoring quiet at last in the home, and this marks the beginning of the married life.

There are some customary differences with regard to these ceremonies in different parts of Russian Armenia and Cilicia, adopted perhaps from the Greeks or other Christian neighbours. Any form of civil marriage is not yet permitted by the doctrine of our Church, and there is scarcely any likelihood of such innovations being grafted so long as the Armenian Church serves as the one great bond of unity among Armenians scattered throughout the world.

(iii) *Funeral Customs.* Longevity is the common rule on the heights of our plateau, except in cases of infant mortality, the percentage of which, I am sorry to say, is very high among the peasantry, owing in the first place to the absolute lack of sanitary conditions in general, but perhaps more particularly to the ignorance of mothers. Once the critical period of childhood is passed, the average duration of life among peasants may be roughly put at 40 to 50 years, if they do not happen to be killed by Turks or Kurds. Centenarians are common, particularly among the peasantry. Perhaps the proverbial Armenian *mazun* (curdled milk or junket), which is fully appreciated as a diet throughout the country, has had something to do with it. After all, has not Professor Metchnikoff pointed out all the phagocytic virtues of *mazun* against the evils of micro-organisms in the human system?

When a person dies in the natural order of things, the relatives of the family gather at the home of the deceased to express their condolences to the surviving inmates. Wailing, a practice of pre-Christian times, is no longer resorted to. In those good old days, the friends and relatives of the deceased gave way to wailing in a demonstrative manner—the men tore their clothes to pieces, while the women cut or plucked out their hair. Many cases of suicide, too, of relatives on the grave of the deceased are recorded by our historians. When the deceased happened to be an important personage, professional wailers, who sang melancholy dirges and wailed with extreme vehemence, were made to follow the funeral procession.

The sacrament of extreme unction has no place in the rites and doctrine of the Armenian Church. The deceased is merely washed in cold water and taken to the church, followed by a procession of friends and relatives. The burial usually takes place a few days afterwards, when relatives and friends again gather at the church to witness the consignment to the grave. Throughout the ceremony, frankincense and aloes are burnt round the dead, and an atmosphere of weird mysticism is created. The corpse is laid to rest with the feet pointing to the East, so that the face is turned in the same direction, a remaining vestige of Zoroastrian belief. When our forefathers worshipped the Sun, at every desire they expressed they turned their faces eastwards, and it is apparently for similar reasons that the congregations in our churches at the present day look eastwards towards the altar.

In heathen times it was believed that the soul of the deceased hovered about the dead body until the burial, after which it started on its journey to the next world. On its way there it had to cross the *Mazé Kamurdj* (The Hair Bridge), considered the supreme test of the life the deceased had led in this world. If he had led a saintly life, and therefore free of sin, he would easily cross the "hair bridge"; if, on

the contrary, he was heavily laden with sin and wickedness, the "hair bridge" would give way under the weight, and he would be precipitated into *Sandaraned*, the world of evil spirits. Christianity has, of course, swept away all such views about the next world and the conception of sin; yet the story of the "hair bridge" lingers on through the centuries and is repeated to every child when he is just out of the cradle. It has come down to us also in the form of an oral tradition embodied in an account of the end of the world.

About 200 B.C. King Artashes reigned over our country. He was a great king, performed many good deeds and was very popular among his courtiers and subjects. When he died, most of the courtiers who were so attached to him, as well as a number of other subjects of his, committed suicide on his grave in order not to survive their beloved king. His son, the indolent Artavazt, being jealous of his father's fame, is said to have delivered himself of the following address at the funeral:—"Father! You have died, and you have carried away with you all that was best. Am I to reign over the ruins that are left?" Artashes, the legend goes, pronounced a curse on his jealous son in the following words: "When you go up the venerable mountain of *Massis* (Ararat) to hunt, may *Kajk* (dragons) of Massis get hold of you and take you to the very depths of the venerable Massis, where may you never see the light again." The story goes on to say that once when Artavazt, with his suite, was hunting on the heights of Massis, accompanied by a couple of bloodhounds, he fell into an abyss where he was promptly put in chains by Dragons. His dogs gnawed at his chains in order to set their master free, who would then emerge from his abyss and put an end to the world. In order to prevent this happening and to weld his chains all the more firmly, so that the world should be saved from inevitable ruin, it was the custom for the blacksmiths of the country, once a year, to knock their hammers on their anvils so as to strengthen his chains.

It is generally believed that this custom of hammering by the blacksmiths on a particular day of the year died out after the adoption of Christianity. A personal experience of mine, however, tends to show some kind of survival of this traditional custom among the Kurdish tribe of Bekran, living in the higher ranges of Anti-Taurus. I was travelling in those mountains, west of Bitlis, during August a few years ago, and spent a night with the powerful chieftain of that nomadic tribe in his tent. At nightfall I heard some hammering going on in another tent in the neighbourhood. On inquiry, the chieftain explained to me that every year in those mountains, at the beginning of the harvest, which as a rule corresponds with the beginning of August, they keep the custom of hammering the chains of some *Sheitan* (Devil) who, if unchained, would bring all manner of misfortune on this world. There is historical evidence that this important Bekran tribe of Kurds are really of Armenian origin, who were converted to Islam in the seventh century, when the Saracens first appeared in this part of our country.

A. S. SAFRASTIAN.

(To be continued.)

A Vision of the Old Year.

It is night, one of those gloomy nights which fill mortals with the fear of Death. Dark and black clouds in close groups and succession march slowly in the sky. It looks as if a mournful procession is in progress in the heavens: The funeral procession of the expired Year.

I begin to meditate with uplifted eyes. A little more and another year will pass over the destiny of humanity, another year will be taken away from the life of the world. A year during which how many lives were ruined, how many hearts were crushed in the grip of sorrow, how many pure souls were soiled and rendered hopeless! And, again, how many had shaken off the yoke of despair, dishonour and sorrow and were treading victoriously the Path of Light!

Yes! Another year, saturated with a mysterious mixture of Life and Death, goes inexorably to be added to those thousands and thousands of years which far, far away from our horizons, roll continually in infinity enveloping within their folds the true history and secrets of centuries.

TIME! What is this immateriality? Is it the offspring of the mind, is it a support for the brain to classify its conceptions? Is it an Illusion or Reality? Where does every passing day, year and century go—where? Are they the mighty pages of the Calendar of God where remain registered the deeds of the life of Mankind? Or can it, perhaps, be the oceanlike river of the heavens which, in its onward course, carries away the Old and the Useless, in order to bestow new life on this World?

Incomprehensible is the secret of heavenly Wisdom!

As to those perished and disappearing lives, where do they go with Time—do they return to the source whence they emanated, or do they go further away to begin another life?

These thoughts become deeper and deeper still, until I am buried under their incomprehensible burden, which, however, fills my soul with heavenly inspiration and, thus freed from material fetters, I begin to soar heavenwards. It was a Vision which had started.

I was flying up, flying beyond the clouds and farther away than the stars in infinity. Darkness had ceased long ago and a snow-white Light, which never gave way to darkness, had filled up the space through which I was gliding. An overflowing strain of Music which human ears could not comprehend and which seemed to me to emanate from that Holy Light was also permeating this infinite space. I was swimming in this endless coalescence of Light and Harmony.

The more my ears became used to this Music, the more I was able to distinguish and to drink in the following words:

"This all-enveloping Light is the love of God. All evil, darkness, sin, pain and sorrow become crushed and destroyed. They are purged and evaporate as soon as they come in contact with Him. Every soul which passes through this Holy Light receives again his initial sacredness."

I was still soaring up when I heard a voice which said : "Stop! You can advance no further." I stopped motionless where I was. O! what a fearful scene was before my eyes!

I beheld an ocean of souls which were rushing towards me. Terrified, I was driven by an impulse to run away, but an unseen hand stopped me and, all of a sudden, a fear-inspiring and resonant voice came out from that exquisite Music, which said : "Stop! O ye insane souls of humanity! Stop at the last threshold of the departing year!" At once I saw that onward rushing ocean tremble and stop.

I looked down and saw a bier on that last step, in which lay dead a grey-haired, worn out old man. His body was covered with many wounds and two drops of frozen tears were resting at the corners of his closed eyes.

The same fearful voice was heard again saying : "Rise up and speak!" The dead trembled and stood up in his shroud shivering, and thus spake with a quivering and emotional voice :

"O! my sons and daughters! Do you recognise me? I am the expired year. I am that precious part of your life which died with the past year. I am the embodiment of your happiness, health and opportunities which you, through your carelessness and negligence lost for ever. Where do you run now so madly? Where do you rush? Is it to reappear and multiply the same follies? Stop and listen to me for a few moments.

"Do you see this big, cruel wound on my heart? It is opened by the rusty dagger of faithlessness and doubt. Do you see these pierced sides? They are the wounds of the spear of your selfishness. These blind eyes! They are the poor victims of your evil ambitions. And this ruined health! It is the result of your intemperance. Do you see at last these wounds on my head? The cruel dagger of your vanity has gone through them. A year ago I was a strong and lively child, but now! You see me and my coffin! I depart—here is for you a new and holy child, the New Year."

And there came seated on the wings of the angels a brilliant child with fiery eyes.

"Look!" continued the old man, "how pure and spotless he is! Have mercy on his freshness, have pity for your happiness, health and opportunities. Cleanse your hearts with the fire of new resolutions and wishes, that during this New Year your souls may be saved. Let my ghostlike form remain before your eyes to terrify you from evil and to lead your steps to the luminous path of truth and love. Farewell to you all for ever!"

Scarcely were these last words uttered when he fell dead again in his sepulchre, which immediately disappeared. The fascinating Music which seemed to have stopped came to my ears again and the same sonorous voice was once more heard saying : "Get on with your course."

The huge crowd of souls trembled and moved on. While they were passing by, I saw many with bent heads and tearful eyes and said to myself, these are the saved ones.

I felt the familiar touch on my shoulders again, and saw this time before me a luminous body. "Walk on," said he, "that you might realise the remaining parts of your wish." We began to advance, and he continued thus to speak :

"Every good and evil deed performed in your world is immediately reflected on the sky, and the life of every person has thus its counterpart portrayed here in the heavens."

Going a little further, it seemed to me that we were in an endless garden. "This," said my guide, "is the garden of promises and resolutions; every time that you make a good promise or resolution, a corresponding flower grows in this garden. If these promises are fulfilled, the flowers here bloom in beauty and remain everlasting unfading; but if they are unkept, these blossoming beauties also fade in their buds. The flowers here represent the promises and resolutions of the last year which, at the beginning and throughout the duration of the year, rose to heaven."

I cast my eyes over the garden and beheld millions of these flowers pale and drooping, signs of broken promises and unfulfilled resolutions. And again I saw thousands of others which were shining like suns by the side of the dead ones, true emblems of carried out resolutions.

"Let us go on," said again my leader. "I will show you now the place where remain reflected the evil deeds of the last year," and we entered into a cavern.

It is beyond my powers of description to picture faithfully the shudder and the pain which filled my being at the sight of such horrible and at the same time pitiful scenes which met my gaze.

There were millions of devilish faces trying to lead astray innocent souls. I was confronted, too, by thousands of infidels who were ruining their souls. In another corner could be seen numberless bands of ambitious people who were torturing themselves by sleepless nights to bring others into their snares. I beheld numerous groups of selfish people, misers and money worshippers, who were grasping each others throats, and trying to snatch from each other's hands loaves of bread and pieces of yellow metal; who were beating each other mercilessly while under their feet lay trampled other numberless innocent ones, men, women and children. I saw in another corner vast groups of gamblers and intemperates who were spending all they had in luxurious living and, having lost their senses and reason, were throwing themselves unconsciously down the precipice of destruction, while at their homes their poor, starving children, clinging to their pale and worn-out mothers with cold and frozen kisses, were fading away in their close embrace.

We passed by these with my heart sorely wounded, but there were still more horrible things to be seen.

Now a huge river of blood was flowing at my feet, and from the dashing of its waves there rose pitiful voices of lamentation and weeping.

Over this river was built a bridge solely by corpses. I passed over it and found myself in endless fields, hills and mountains all covered with dead bodies of soldiers. This was the battlefield. Death and ruin reigned everywhere.

I beheld reflected above every corpse the bitter pang which had a creased the souls of its family, relations or friends. O! pitiful sight!

I saw mothers, wives, sweethearts, sisters who, in their despair, were tearing out their hair and beating their heads. I beheld numberless poor and defenceless orphans, in the arms of their already broken-hearted mothers, starving to death. I saw again thousands of families terror-stricken, who were flying away from fire and blood holding their children by the hand or carrying them at their breasts, escaping breathless and exhausted from their dear homes. I also beheld many loving souls who had fallen on their knees with tearful eyes and were praying for the safe return of their beloved ones—but, alas! these were already lying dead.

My glance passed over these bodies, while my heart also bled, but this was not all. Further away mighty flames were shooting up from the North, South, East and West. The ground I was treading upon was covered everywhere with hot ashes of ruined cities, villages and homes, helpless victims of Militarism and Conquest.

At sight of all this, disclosed to me at these heavenly heights, where there is neither real sorrow nor pain, my eyes filled with tears and, covering my face with my hands, I burst into a loud lamentation.

Exhausted, and uncovering my face, to my great joy and amazement I discovered that I was transported from that hellish place to a veritable spot of bliss which is beyond my powers of description, unless my earthly pen could be transformed into a heavenly flame of inspiration.

This new place was an inexplicable mixture of verdant valleys, sweetly harmonized by numerous crystal streams, blossoming fields and dales and flowery hills. That fascinating Music and that pure, sacred Light, to which I have referred before, were predominant over this paradise-like expanse.

My guide, turning to me, said, “*This is the place of Love and Virtues.*” I saw here also millions of souls, but all with luminous faces, who were raising up the fallen, consoling the hopeless, nursing the sick, caring for the orphans; but these fallen ones, the hopeless, the sick and the orphans had no look of suffering—on the contrary, grateful smiles illuminated their countenances, so that this spot of blessedness and beauty bore no reflection whatever of any pain or sorrow.

Looking further away I saw numerous families, fathers, mothers and children, who in the sweetness of their homes were enjoying each others love. I saw again numberless couples of sweethearts who, under the refreshing and fragrant shades of trees, were like birds twittering to each other and immersed in heavenly love.

At sight of all these scenes of goodness, love and beauty, my soul began to overflow with joy and happiness. It seemed to me that every act of love, every piece of goodness and of beauty which we see in man is the reflection of the heavenly perfect love, and that on our earth far more of goodness and of happiness exist than we have any adequate knowledge of.

“*Now you have seen all that belonged to the Year that has passed on,*” said my guide, and all at once everything before my eyes turned into darkness.

The Vision was ended. The old year was buried, and the New Year had started on its course.

D. H. NEVSEHIR.

